

Message to Constituents

U.S. Congressman Elijah E. Cummings

Representing the 7th U.S. Congressional District of Maryland

February 27, 2004

Internet: <http://www.house.gov/cummings>

1632 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

(202) 225-4741 (telephone) (202) 225-3178 (fax)



Dear Constituent:

It is both a privilege and an honor to represent you in the United States Congress. While serving you, I will continue further outreach efforts to inform you of legislative action in Congress. I welcome your advice. Government "by the people" is the cornerstone of my legislative philosophy.

To better serve you closer to home, I invite you to visit or contact one of my district offices, which I have listed on the following pages. In Howard County, my staff and I make regular outreach visits at various community centers. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Congressman Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress

Congressman Cummings Expresses Concern Over the FY '05 Federal Budget Proposal: Plans to Work with Colleagues to Draft Alternative Budget

As Congress began to analyze and debate the Bush Administration's Fiscal Year 2005 Budget proposal, Congressman Cummings urged the Republican Leadership to adopt a plan that truly builds and empowers the nation. Sent annually to Congress by the President, the budget proposal is a blueprint for federal spending during the upcoming fiscal year.

"This Budget contains misplaced priorities that leaves American families behind," Congressman Cummings said.

Congressman Cummings noted that the budget proposal adds a \$521 billion deficit to a current national debt of \$7 trillion.

"That is roughly \$2,000 for every woman, man, and child in America today," Congressman Cummings said. "This is very disappointing, given that at the beginning of the Bush Administration, we had a \$280 billion surplus, and were expecting record budget surpluses for years to come."

Economists note that increased deficits signal danger for the economy because they result in higher interest rates, slow economic growth, lower national savings, and reduced economic productivity.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has said that if the \$1.7 billion tax cut were allowed to expire in 2011, the budget would be balanced by 2014. However, the Administration still plans to introduce its permanent tax cut proposal and press for continued defense spending, while eliminating more than 60 federal programs that would otherwise strengthen our nation.

As to the proposed 60-plus program abandonment, Congressman Cummings said, "We cannot grow as a nation with 9 million Americans out of work, 43 million without health insurance and a future generation that lacks the educational resources to compete in the 21st century global economy. Yet, this budget proposes to cut more than 60 programs that were designed to address many of these concerns."

(Continued on the Next Page)

FY 05 Budget Proposal (From Pg. 1)

Some of the programs that the budget proposal plans to abandon include:

- **The Small Business Administration's Microloan Program:** This program increases the amount of capital available for businesses that traditionally have difficulties in finding financing. The program is directed towards minorities, women, low-income individuals, veterans, those without credit histories, and the operators of very small businesses.
- **Drop Out Prevention Program:** A Department of Education program that encourages students to stay in school.
- **The Metropolitan Medical Response System:** A Health and Human Services Program that prepares emergency medical personnel in case of a biological attack or other massive public emergency.

"These are all programs that build our economy, train our workforce, or protect our homeland and should be preserved," Congressman Cummings said.

In coming weeks, Congressman Cummings plans to work with several of his colleagues to draft an alternative federal budget that will promote responsible federal spending.

Congressman Cummings Helps Promote Fire Safety in Homes

Following the seventh fire-related death of 2004 in Baltimore City, Congressman Cummings joined the Baltimore City Fire Department in late January to encourage residents to take the necessary steps to protect their homes against fire. Congressman Cummings participated in the "After the Fire" campaign at Gwynns Falls Elementary School.

On New Year's Day, 9-year old Diamond VanDyke and her brother, 6-year old Anthony, died in a house fire on the 2900 block of Windsor Avenue. Both

children were students at Gwynns Falls Elementary School.

During the school event, members of the Fire Department gave out vouchers for free smoke detectors and discussed fire safety tips including the importance of home evacuation programs.

"Parents need to understand that by implementing these preventive measures, the life they save may be their child's," Congressman Cummings noted. "It is imperative that we all take responsibility in keeping our families safe from fire hazards."

For more information about free smoke detectors and installation you can contact your local fire department.



Congressman Cummings congratulates several young men who reached the rank of Eagle Scout (the highest rank a Boy Scout can achieve) in the Baltimore Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America. At the event, the group presented Congressman Cummings with the Silver Beaver award. Photo courtesy of the Baltimore Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Congressman Cummings Pushes for Full Reauthorization of Highway-Transit Bill

On Feb. 12, Congressman Cummings voted for the extension of the *Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century* (H.R. 3783) TEA-21, that will continue to provide federal funds for highways and public transit through June 30, 2004. The bill, better known as "TEA-21," was an extension of a 6-year highway bill that provided a guaranteed level of federal funding for surface transportation from 1998 to 2003.

Currently Congressman Cummings, who serves on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, is working with his colleagues to give this bill full reauthorization through FY 2009.

Entitled, the "*Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (H.R. 3550) or "TEA-LU," the bill would authorize \$375 billion over 6 years in order to rebuild the nation's roads, bridges, and mass transit. This investment in highways and mass transit would create an additional 1.73 million jobs, while working to improve one-third of America's roads, bridges, transit vehicles, and facilities that are in poor condition.

"Maryland would benefit significantly from this 6-year extension," Congressman Cummings said. "However, instead of completing action on a full six-year highway bill, Congressional Republicans are merely providing a temporary extension of TEA-21."

He noted that the House Republican leadership is delaying full consideration of this bill on the House floor in order to consider a bill that would provide less funding than the bipartisan TEA-LU.

According to the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials, a short-term extension of TEA-21 would result in \$2.1 billion in project delays and the loss of more than 90,000 jobs.

"With nearly 9 million Americans currently out of work, I urge the House Leadership to expedite the passage of the full transportation bill. Every \$1 billion invested in federal highway and transit spending creates 47,500 jobs," Congressman Cummings said.

Congressman Cummings Announces Nominees to U.S. Service Academies

Students to Compete Nationwide for Service Academy Appointments

On Saturday, February 21, 2004, Congressman Cummings officially announced his nominations for candidacy to the United States Service Academies. The students from Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County were selected based on academic achievement, leadership potential, physical fitness, and participation in extracurricular and community activities.

Universally recognized as some of the nation's most elite colleges, the Service Academies consist of the U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy, and U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. Students who are appointed will receive a free education valued at well over \$200,000.

At the announcement, Congressman Cummings recognized the outstanding achievements of the nominees and thanked them for their hard work and dedication.

"I am privileged to be involved in the selection of candidates to the U.S. Service Academies," Congressman Cummings said. "These exceptional students have demonstrated their unlimited potential and a proven track record of capable leadership."

The 32 students who were nominated have different backgrounds and varied interests. Their common thread is a commitment to their education and a desire to serve our nation.

"The courage and strong sense of duty demonstrated by these students can be attributed, in part, to the guiding values of their parents, teachers, and communities," Congressman Cummings noted.

One student, 17-year old Jeremy Frey of Long Reach High School in Columbia decided he wanted to join the military at the young age of three. "I'm very excited about the nomination," Mr. Frey said, "I've been interested in a military career since I started taking Martial Arts."

Mr. Frey hopes to become a Navy Seal. (*Continued on Page 4*)

U.S. Service Academy Nominees, From Pg. 3

Congressman Cummings has formed a Military Service Academy Review Board to assist in the selection process. Two members of the Review Board have military backgrounds.

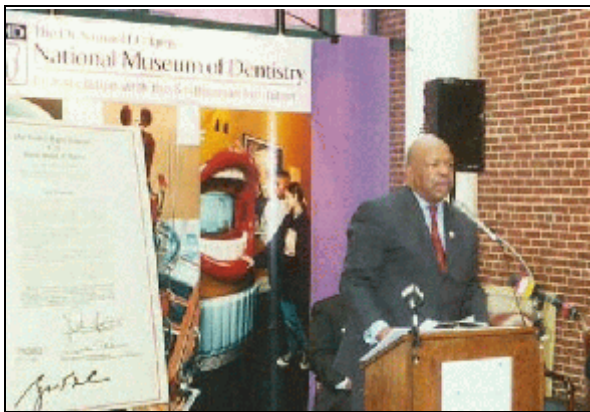
Dr. Edgar Rouhlac, Vice Provost at Johns Hopkins University, has served on the Review Board for five years. He says the number of talented applicants they reviewed made the selection process difficult.

"It is a wonderful opportunity to bring my expertise to helping introduce future officers to the military," Dr. Rouhlac said. "It's like touching the face of our destiny."

Five of Congressman Cummings' nominees have already received appointments to Service Academies: **Katie Griffin of Howard County** was appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy; **Michael Kovacevich of Baltimore County** was appointed to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy; **Cole Livieratos of Howard County** was appointed to the U.S. Military Academy; **Paul Marcotte of Howard County** was appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy; and **Christina Monmonier of Baltimore County** was appointed to the U.S. Military Academy.

For more information on the U.S. Service Academy Nomination process, you can log onto Congressman Cummings's website at www.house.gov/cummings and click on the "Parents and Students" icon. The complete list of nominees is also posted online.

Congressman Cummings congratulates the National Museum of Dentistry in Baltimore for becoming the official national museum of dental health. The museum received this federal designation as



a result of legislation sponsored by Congressman Cummings and Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes (D-MD), H.J.Res. 52.

Congressman Cummings's District Offices

**1010 Park Avenue, Suite 105
Baltimore, MD 21201**
(410) 685-9199 and (410) 685-9399 fax

**754 Frederick Road
Catonsville, Maryland 21228**
(410) 719-8777 and (410) 455-0110 fax

Howard County Outreach Centers

First Monday of the Month:
Glenwood Library, 2350 Route 97
Cooksville, MD 21723
Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by appointment

Second Monday of the Month:
Howard County Central Library
10375 Little Patuxent Pkwy.
Columbia, MD 21044
Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by appointment

Second Wednesday of the Month:
Savage Library, 9525 Durness Lane
Laurel, MD 20723
Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by appointment

Third Monday of the Month:
Florence Bain Senior Center
5470 Ruth Keeton Way
Columbia, MD 21044
Hours: 9:00AM - 11 AM or by appointment

Fourth Monday of the Month:
Miller Branch Library, 9421 Frederick Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042
**Hours: 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM or by
appointment**